

REMARKS


By the above actions, claim 1 has been further amended. In view of the amendments made to claim 1 and the following remarks, further consideration of this application is requested.

The undersigned wishes to thank the Examiner for taking the time to discuss her repeated rejection of claims 1 and under 35 USC § 103 based on the combined teachings of the Moore '638 and Ono patents in a telephonic interview conducted on December 4, 2008 as well as the above amendments which were presented in response to the Examiner's explanations. In particular, the Examiner indicated that her position is that, on the basis of Ono, it would be obvious to have multiple wafer expander units as shown in Moore '638 mounted to move from one of Moore '638's work areas to another and that the claims were considered to encompass such a device. However, as indicated on the Interview Summary issued relative to said discussions, the Examiner did indicate that the above further amendment of claim 1 would be viewed as overcoming her use of the combined teachings of Moore '638 and Ono. Accordingly, withdrawal of the outstanding rejection is submitted to now be in order and action to the effect is requested.

Likewise, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5-8 under 35 USC § 103 based on the combined teachings of the Moore '638 and Ono patents when viewed in further combination with the Bailey patent is also in order since nothing in the disclosure of the Bailey patent (which relates to article strapping) can overcome the acknowledged inability of the Moore '638 and Ono patents to render obvious the currently amended claim 1 and same is true for the Cullen et al. disclosure since this patent has no relevance to either the present invention or the methods of the Moore '638 and Ono patents. The same is also true for the rejection of claims 9-11 based on the combined teachings of the Moore '638 and Ono patents when viewed in further combination with the Tsujimoto et al. patent and for the rejection of claims 12-17 based on the combined teachings of the Moore '638 and Ono patents when viewed in further combination with the Moore '051 and Tsujimoto et al. patents as well as that of claims 18-29 based on the combined teachings of the Moore '638 and Ono patents when viewed in further combination with the Broyles and Tsujimoto et al. patents.

Therefore, in the absence of new and more relevant prior art being discovered, this application should now be in condition for allowance and action to that effect is requested. However, while it is believed that this application should now be in condition for allowance, in the event that any issues should remain, or an new issues arise, after consideration of this response which could be addressed through discussions with the undersigned, then the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned by telephone for the purpose of resolving any such issue and thereby facilitating prompt approval of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

David S. Safran
Registration No. 27,997

Customer No. 25570

Roberts Mlotkowski Safran & Cole, P.C
PO Box 10064
McLean, VA 22102

Direct Telephone: (703) 584-3273

DSS:kmm